"Gnashing of Teeth"

There has been much "wailing and gnashing of teeth" in some law enforcement circles lately in response to developments in the criminal law, particularly confessions, interrogations, search and seizure, and various rights of the accused. Historically, American courts have assumed the responsibility of assuring that governmental power is not misused to injure the rights of individual citizens . . . There is little to be gained from just shouting protests and criticisms, but there is much to be gained from throwing our full resources and energies into training a professional law enforcement corps to be effective within the framework of current rules of law and evidence.

Who said that? Some bleeding heart? Some professional do-gooder? Some sentimental coddler of criminals? Not exactly. The words were written by J. Edgar Hoover in the FBI *Law Enforcement Bulletin*. They make an invaluable contribution to effective law enforcement, in our opinion. They put in perspective the prophecies of doom that have come from some less thoughtful police officers and prosecutors. They remind Americans that the restraints which the Supreme Court has placed upon investigation and prosecution of crime are among the fundamental political rights of free men; they are the indispensable means of forestalling arbitrary and tyrannical governmental power.

Law enforcement has not been shackled. Criminals have not been given *carte blanche*. Resourceful and resolute policemen are going steadily about their business of investigating crime and bringing criminals to justice—and by methods that commend themselves to a free and self-governing people. Mr. Hoover deserves thanks for helping to make that plain.